

Defense Language Proficiency Test 5 System

Familiarization Guide for Constructed Response Format



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Introduction

This Familiarization Guide is designed to provide prospective examinees with information about the Defense Language Proficiency Test 5 System (DLPT5). This guide contains general information about the test design, the format of the test, its length, its content, the skills tested, and procedures used in scoring and reporting the scores. In addition, screen shots on what the examinees will see when taking the test on the computer as well as information on testing procedures are provided. However, for information regarding a specific DLPT5 test, prospective examinees should refer to the Familiarization Guide for that test.

Overview of the DLPT5 Test

The DLPT5 is designed to assess the general language proficiency in reading and listening of native speakers of English who have learned a foreign language as a second language. The DLPT5 tests measure proficiency as defined by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions, levels 1 – 4 (see Appendix A). All DLPT5s will be delivered on the computer.

DLPT5s in many languages include both a Lower-Range test and an Upper-Range test. The Lower-Range test measures ILR proficiency levels 0+ - 3, while the Upper-Range measures ILR proficiency levels 3 - 4. Examinees will normally take the lower-range DLPT5; those who receive a score of 3 on this test may be eligible to take the upper-range test, depending on the policy of their institution. The DLPT5 tests will be used to make operational readiness, incentive pay, and training decisions for civilian and military language analysts in the United States government.

Description of the DLPT5

Lower-Range Test

- **Test Design**
 - The Lower-Range Reading Test contains 60 questions with about 30 authentic passages. Each passage has up to 3 questions.

- The Lower-Range Listening Test contains 60 questions with 30 authentic passages. Each passage has two questions and is played twice.
- Examinees have 3 hours to complete the Reading Test and 3 hours to complete the Listening test. Approximately halfway through each test, examinees will be given a 15-minute break. The break does not count toward the test time. For the Listening Test, although the playing of the passages is controlled by the computer, examinees may take as much or as little time as they wish to answer the questions. Managing the time effectively is the examinee's responsibility, just as it is on the reading test.
- **Test Content**
 - The DLPT5 is designed to measure proficiency in the target language regardless of how it has been acquired. For this reason, and because of the broad proficiency orientation of the test, its content is not tied to any particular language-training program.
 - The passages included in the test are sampled from authentic materials and real-life sources such as signs, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts, the Internet, etc.
 - The passages cover a broad range of content areas, including social, cultural, political, economic, geographic, scientific, and military topics.
 -
- **Test Format:** The test includes instructions on how to take the test, examples on how to answer the questions, and question sets containing the following parts:
 - **Orientation:** This is a short statement in English that appears before each passage. Its purpose is to identify the context from which the passage is taken.
 - **Passage:** This is the only element of the test that is in the target language being tested. The maximum length of a listening comprehension passage in the test is approximately 2 minutes. The maximum length of a reading comprehension passage is approximately 300 words. Most of the passages are much shorter than the maximum length.
 - **Questions:** They are in English and are based on the passage. They are usually of a general character. You will **not** be asked questions about numbers.

- **Answer box:** For each question, there is a box on the screen in which examinees type their answer in English. Examinees may also type notes in these boxes if they wish.

Upper-Range Test

- **Test Design**

- The Upper-Range Reading Test contains 60 questions with about 30 authentic passages. Each passage has up to 3 questions.
- The Upper-Range Listening Test contains 60 questions with 30 authentic passages. Each passage has two questions and is played twice.
- Examinees have 3 hours to complete the Reading Test and 3 hours to complete the Listening test. Approximately halfway through each test, examinees will be given a 15-minute break. The break does not count toward the test time. For the Listening Test, although the playing of the passages is controlled by the computer, examinees may take as much or as little time as they wish to answer the questions. Managing the time effectively is the examinee's responsibility, just as it is on the reading test.

- **Test Content**

- The DLPT5 is designed to measure proficiency in the target language regardless of how it has been acquired. For this reason, and because of the broad proficiency orientation of the test, its content is not tied to any particular language-training program.
- The passages included in the test are sampled from authentic materials and real-life sources such as signs, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts, the Internet, etc.
- The passages cover a broad range of content areas, including social, cultural, political, economic, geographic, scientific, and military topics.
-

- **Test Format:** The test includes instructions on how to take the test, examples on how to answer the questions, and question sets containing the following parts:

- **Orientation:** This is a short statement in English that appears before each passage. Its purpose is to identify the context from which the passage is taken.

- **Passage:** This is the only element of the test that is in the target language being tested. The maximum length of a listening comprehension passage in the test is approximately 2.5 minutes. The maximum length of a reading comprehension passage is approximately 400 words. Most of the passages are much shorter than the maximum length.
- **Questions:** They are in English and are based on the passage. They are usually of a general character. You will **not** be asked questions about numbers.
- **Answer box:** For each question, there is a box on the screen in which examinees type their answer in English. Examinees may also type notes in these boxes if they wish.

Because test security and confidentiality are extremely important, examinees should not discuss test content with anyone.

Scoring

Examinee scores are reported in terms of ILR levels, including “plus” ratings. Lower-Range tests are intended to cover ILR levels 0+ through 3. Possible scores are 0, 0+, 1, 1+, 2, 2+, and 3. Upper-Range tests are intended to cover ILR levels 3 through 4. Possible scores are 3, 3+, and 4. Separate scores are reported for reading and listening.

Scores on either type of test reflect current functional language proficiency in reading and listening as defined in the ILR Skill Level Descriptions (see Appendix A). Scores do **not** reflect proficiency in speaking or writing, nor do they reflect examinees’ job-related performance or ability to perform specific language-related tasks under special circumstance (e.g., reading or listening to a target language passage indefinitely many times with the aid of supplemental reference materials and information sources).

Scores on the test will be based on the number of questions answered correctly at each ILR level. Each question targets a specific ILR level. Examinees generally have to answer at least 70% of questions correctly at a given level to be assigned that level. Examinees must pass each lower level in order to pass a higher level; therefore, it is to examinees’ advantage to answer all questions thoroughly, rather than skipping the easier questions to focus on the harder ones. Examinee answers will be evaluated by testing experts at the Defense Language Institute according to a detailed scoring protocol.

Preparation for Taking the DLPT5 test

The purpose of this publication is to familiarize prospective examinees with the DLPT5 format and general testing procedures. Other than carefully reading this guide so that the test instructions and format are familiar, there is very little to be gained from “studying” for the test. The best preparation for the DLPT5 is the acquisition of a solid base of general proficiency in the target language, both through formal training, and language exposure and use in a variety of real-life language-use settings. Examinees should know that study aids (i.e., dictionaries, reference books, etc) are not permitted for this test.

Instructions for taking the DLPT5 test

Taking the tests


The purpose of this section is to familiarize prospective examinees with how to take the computer-based DLPT5 Reading and Listening tests. Test procedures and instructions for both the Reading and Listening tests are provided.

Answers should be complete, concise, and relevant. Examinees are not expected to write essays or word-for-word complete translations. Examinees must provide all the information requested to receive credit.

Test Procedures

This section is to help prospective examinees become familiar with the test procedures of the DLPT5 Reading and Listening tests. First, there will be a short description of what the examinees see before the actual test begins. Then screen shots of what examinees will see on the computer screen will be provided.

At the beginning of the test, a series of introductory screens appears. These screens contain the Privacy Act Statement, the Disclaimer for Defense language Institute Tests, the Test Administrative State (of the examinee's ability to take the test at that time), and the Non-Disclosure Statement. The examinee must click on the indicated space before moving to the next screen.

DLPT 5 Listening Comprehension Test for Russian Form A	
<p>DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE</p> <p>Defense Language Proficiency Test 5</p> <p>Multiple Choice Format</p>  <p>Russian</p> <p>Language Code RU</p> <p>Listening Comprehension</p> <p>Form A</p>	<p>Please DO NOT START until told to do so.</p> <p>If you have difficulty with the instructions or any functions of this test, please raise your hand and the Test Administrator will assist you.</p> <p>FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY</p> <p>Controlled Item (Test Material)</p> <p>Not to be shown to unauthorized persons</p> <p>Not to be reproduced without authority granted by the Commandant</p> <p>Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center</p> <p>To begin the test, click the Begin button below.</p>
<p>Help</p> <p>Introduction: Screen 1 of 7</p>	<p>Begin</p>

Privacy Act Statement:

Disclosure of requested information is solicited under the authority of Title 10, United States Code 3012, Executive Order 9397 and Army Regulation 600-2 and is mandatory. Social Security Number is used as the personal identifier number of all personnel under control of the Department of Defense, and is used in connection with updating information in official records and training files. Use of Social Security Number provides for objective scoring of Defense Language Institute tests, as the student's Social Security Number is the only identifier so as to maintain confidentiality when reporting test scores to students. Failure to provide Social Security Number may result in misidentification and non-credit for tests, and/or inadequate counseling and guidance.

Disclaimer for Defense Language Institute Tests:

Materials for this test come from authentic sources within the target culture. These sources often include conversations or written material of a controversial nature, which are essential for understanding world events. As a result, there may be topics, ideas, and language in the areas of politics, international relations, mores, etc. that may be considered contentious. The presence of controversial statements on a test should not be construed as representing the opinions of the test development team, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, or the Department of the Army.

☐ I confirm having read and understood both the Privacy Act Statement and the Disclaimer.

Click on the checkbox above to confirm.

[Help](#)

Introduction: Screen 2 of 7

[<< Back](#)

Test Administration Statement:

I understand that I am not required to take the Dari Listening Comprehension Test at this time if there are extenuating circumstances, such as fatigue, illness, emotional distress, family or financial problems, etc., which may interfere with my performance on the test; and that the test will be administered at another time acceptable to me, the Test Administrator, and my unit commander.

Non-Disclosure Statement:

I understand that this test is **FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY** and the unauthorized discussion, disclosure or possession of any part of this test is a violation of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and will result in appropriate administrative action to fix responsibility for such unauthorized behavior with criminal sanctions of up to two years hard labor and dishonorable discharge for those involved. Such unauthorized discussion or disclosure refers to RELATING ANY ASPECT OF THIS TEST TO ANYONE, including an instructor, fellow service member, spouse, or class member.

☒ I confirm having read and understood both the Test Administration and the Non-Disclosure Statements.

Click on the checkbox above to confirm.

[Help](#)

Introduction: Screen 3 of 7

[<< Back](#)[Next >>](#)

The next screen contains a form on which the examinee must fill in personal data. The examinee must click on the [Register] button before moving to the next screen. A dialogue box confirming the examinee information will appear. The examinee is required to verify the information by clicking [OK] or [Cancel].

DLPT 5 Listening Comprehension Test for Dari Form A

Your Personal Data:

Please enter your information in the boxes below.

Last Name:

First Name:

Middle Initial:

PIN:

Register

PIN = 9-digit Social Security Number (xxx-xx-xxxx) or your unique identifier.

Fill in the data above and then click on the [Register] button.

Introduction: Screen 4 of 6

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The next few screens contain examples of the screen layout for examinees to familiarize themselves with the features of the test, instructions for taking the test and a sample test passage. The text and questions in these screens appear smaller than the text and questions on the actual test passages.

Reading comprehension test

Example of screen layout for the reading comprehension test: The example text represents a generic foreign language; it is not meant to be legible. Explanations of the parts of the screen are provided.

DLPT5 Reading Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A

Example of Screen Layout

Familiarize yourself with the features of this screen now.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PASSAGE

- Paragraphs are marked ¶1, ¶2, etc
- If a question asks about a specific word or phrase it is highlighted in red in the text.
- A red line indicates the end of the passage.
- If a passage is long, you may need to use the scrollbar to see the entire passage.

DLPT 5 Reading Comprehension Test for Language X Form x

from a magazine article

¶1 XXX XXXX XX XXXXX YYYYYY XX
 YYY YYYYY XXXXX XXXX YYY
 XXXXX YYY YY YYY XXXXX YYY.

¶2 YYYYYY YYYYY YYY XXXX XXXX
 XYXYXX XXXX XXXXXXXX YYYYY YYY.
 XXX YYYYY XXXXXXX XXXXX YYY
 XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX. XX YYYYYY
 XYXYXY VVXXVXY XYXYXX YY YYY
 YXYX YXXXXX XX YYYYYXY XY. XX
 XXYYXX XYXX XYXX XYX YX XY
 :XXYY YYYYYY XXXXX XXXXX YYY
 YXYXYXY YYYYY YYY XXXY XY XX.

End of this passage.

Mark this passage for later consideration. ☐

The text shown above represents a generic foreign language. It is not meant to be legible.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the author claim about his sources?
2. What is the author's purpose in discussing this issue?
3. What does the author attempt in using the expression «VVXXVXY» ?

End of questions for this passage

- To answer a question, click in the text box and type.
- To change an answer, erase it and retype it.
- If a question asks about a specific word or phrase, it is highlighted in red.
- A red line indicates the end of the questions.

STATUS BAR

Passage 2 of 5

Passage #
Total # of Passages

3 questions

of Questions
for this passage

Test ends in: 137:39

Time remaining

Back Next

Go to:
Previous Passage Next Passage

NAVIGATION BUTTONS

Help Introduction: Screen 5 of 6 **Next >>**

Instructions screen for the reading comprehension test:

DLPT5 Reading Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A

INSTRUCTIONS

This test measures your reading comprehension in Norwegian. In taking the test you should do the following:

- Read the short statement before each passage that tells you where the passage came from.
- Read the Norwegian passage and the questions that follow carefully.
- Type your answer in English in the text-boxes provided. Your answer should be complete, concise, and relevant. You must provide all the information requested to receive credit.

If you need help during the test, press the [Help] key.

A Sample Passage will follow on next page.

Help

Introduction: Screen 6 of 6

Back

Next

The next screen contains one sample passage with its associated question or questions.

Example of a reading sample passage:

DLPT5 Reading Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A	
<p>Sample Passage</p> <p><i>An announcement in a national newspaper</i></p> <p>Kongen har bedt meg fortelle at han setter pris på hilsener og all omtanke, sa kronprins Haakon. Kongen skal opereres på Rikshospitalet kommende mandag. Etter planen må kong Harald regne med å bli på sykehuset i to til tre uker. Da rekker han akkurat å reise til Kongsseteren for å feire jul med familien.</p> <hr/> <p>End of Sample Passage</p> <p>Mark this passage for later consideration. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Type your answers in the boxes below.</p> <p>S1. What will happen to the King?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> <p>S2. What will the King do afterwards?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> <hr/> <p>End of questions for Sample Passage</p>

After the sample passage, the examinee clicks on the [Next] button and moves to the test start screen.

DLPT5 Reading Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A	
<p>End-of-Test Review Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After the last passage, <i>if there is still time on the clock</i>, you will have the opportunity to review your answers before submitting the test.• From the review page you will be able to jump to any given passage.• You will be able to respond to any questions you have not answered, or you can change an answer.• Detailed instructions for this review will be given at the end of the test.	<p>Start of Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This reading test contains: 28 passages with a total of 60 questions.• You are allowed 3 hours (180 minutes) to complete the test.• There will be a 15 minute break at 90 minutes. The break does not count against the total time allowed for the test.• When you are ready, click the [Start Test] button below.• The screen will move to Passage 1 and the clock will begin.
Help	Test ends in: 180:00 Back Start Test

Listening comprehension test

Example of screen layout for the listening comprehension test:

DLPT5 Listening Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A

Example of Screen Layout

Familiarize yourself with the features of this screen now.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "DLPT 5 Listening Comprehension Test for Language X Form x". Inside, there is a text area with the passage: "This passage is taken from a news broadcast." followed by two questions. Question 1 is "What phenomenon are the villagers experiencing?" and Question 2 is "What do they think is the cause of this?". Each question has a text input box. A red line separates the questions from the end of the passage. Below the passage, it says "End of this passage." and "Mark this passage for later consideration." with a checkbox. At the bottom, a status bar displays "Passage 1 of 10", "2 questions", and "Test ends in: 37:39".

TITLE BAR

- indicates the test title and section.

ORIENTATION STATEMENT

- explains source of passage in English.

QUESTIONS

- To answer a question, click in the text box and type.
- To change your answer, erase it and retype it.
- A red line indicates the end of the questions.
- To see all the questions, you may need to scroll.

STATUS BAR shows:

- Current passage number
- Total number of passages
- Number of questions in current passage
- Audio Status or Timer

Passage 1 of 10 2 questions Test ends in: 37:39

Passage # # of Questions
Total # of Passages for this passage Time remaining

Help Introduction: Screen 5 of 7 Next

The next two screens contain instructions for the listening comprehension test:

DLPT5 Listening Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A

Test Sequence

- When a passage screen opens, the audio begins automatically.
- When the audio finishes, the [Next] button will appear.
- When you are finished answering and ready to move on to the next passage, click on the [Next] button.
- You will go to the next passage. You will not be able to go back to previous passages until the end of the test.

The Clock

- The amount of time allotted for this test is 180 minutes (3 hours).
- There is a break in the middle of the test. It does not count against your time.
- It is your responsibility to keep track of where you are in the test, and how much time is remaining.

BEFORE YOU PROCEED, adjust your volume.

Test Volume

Click the [Test Volume] button to hear a short audio file.

Help

Introduction: Screen 6 of 7

Back

ATTENTION: You should hear a voice reading the instructions below.

If the audio is not clear or loud enough, raise your hand now to alert the Test Administrator.

INSTRUCTIONS

This test is intended to measure your listening comprehension in Norwegian. It contains a number of listening passages in Norwegian, each one followed by two questions based on that passage.

- Before each passage you will hear a statement in English that explains the context from which the passage was taken.
- Then you will be given a short amount of time to read the questions pertaining to the passage.
- You will then hear the Norwegian passage itself. Each passage will be played twice. There will be a short tone between the two playings.
- After hearing the passage, you will be reminded which questions are to be answered at this point. Read each question carefully.
- Your answer should be complete, concise, and relevant. You must provide all the information requested to receive credit.

If you need help during the test, press the [Help] key.

A Sample Passage will follow on next page.

Example of listening sample questions (the sample passage audio is played while the screen is displayed):

DLPT5 Listening Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A

Sample Passage

Type your answers in the boxes below.

From a conversation between husband and wife

S1. Why was the man late?

S2. What did the wife request?

End of questions for Sample Passage

Mark this passage for later consideration. ☐

Sample Passage 2 questions

Audio Playing

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After the sample passage, the examinee clicks on the [Next] button and moves to the test start screen.

DLPT5 Listening Comprehension Test for Norwegian Form A	
<div><h3>End-of-Test Review Information</h3><ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the end of the test, <i>if there is still time on the clock</i>, you will have the opportunity to review your answers before submitting the test.• From the review page you will be able to jump to any given passage.• You will be able to respond to any questions you have not answered, or change an answer.• You will not hear the audio again during this review period.• Detailed instructions for this review will be given at the end of the test.<hr/></div>	<div><h3>Start of Test</h3><ul style="list-style-type: none">• This listening test contains: 30 passages, and a total of 60 questions.• The test is 180 minutes (3 hours) long.• There will be a 15 minute break at Passage 19. The break does not count against the total time allowed for the test.• When you are ready, click the [Start Test] button below.• The screen will move to Passage 1 and the clock will begin.<hr/></div>
<div>Help</div>	<div><div>End of Instructions</div><div>Test ends in: 180:00</div><div>Back Start Test</div></div>

Navigating in the Listening Test

When a passage screen opens, the audio begins automatically.

Each passage will be played twice. There will be a short tone between the two playings.

When the audio finishes, the [Next] button will appear.

Examinees can move on to the next passage once the audio has finished playing by clicking on the [Next] button. They can take as much or as little time as they wish to answer.

Examinees will not be able to go back to previous passages until the end of the test.

(Note: for the reading test, examinees will be able to go back to previous passages if they wish.)

End-of-Test Review Information

At the end of each test, a review screen appears for examinees to review their responses to the questions before submitting the test.

From the review page, examinees will be able to jump to any given passage.

They will be able to respond to any questions they have not answered, or they can change an answer.

The audio for the Listening Test will **not** be played again during this review period.

Example of the review screen:

DLPT 5 Lower Range Reading Comprehension Test for Russian Form A

End of Reading Test

- In the chart below, an asterisk (*) in the Answer column means that you have answered a question.
- If you see the word **BLANK**, it means that **no answer** has been registered for this question.
- If you see an **X** next to a passage number, it means that you marked that passage for further consideration as you were taking the test.
- To review/change any answer, click the row below which corresponds to the question number.

Passage	Q #	Answer		Passage	Q #	Answer		Passage	Q #	Answer		Passage	Q #	Answer
1	1	*		17	17	Blank		29	33	*		38	48	*
2	2	*		18	18	Blank		30	34	*		49	*	*
3	3	*		19	19	*		31	35	*		50	*	*
4	4	*		20	20	*			36	*		51	*	*
5	5	*		21	21	*			37	*		52	*	*
6	6	*		22	22	*		32	38	*		53	*	*
7	7	*		23	23	Blank			39	*		54	*	*
8	8	*		24	24	*		33	40	*		55	*	*
9	9	*	X	25	25	*		34	41	*		56	*	*
10	10	Blank		26	26	*		35	42	*		57	*	*
11	11	*		27	27	*			43	Blank		58	*	*
X 12	12	*		28	28	*		36	44	*		59	*	*
13	13	*		29	29	*			45	*		60	*	*
14	14	*	X	30	30	*		37	46	*		61	*	*
15	15	*		31	31	*			47	*				
16	16	*		32	32	*								

- When you are satisfied and are ready to submit your test, click the [Submit] button below.

Review Answers

Test ends in: 176:56

Submit

Sample Passages

Below are some sample passages, questions, and answers (passages translated into English). Note that it is not necessary to provide the exact wording of the answers in order to get credit; any response that expresses the key ideas is correct.

Sample 1

An announcement in a national newspaper

“The King has asked me to say that he appreciates the greetings and all thoughtfulness”, said Crown Prince Haakon. The King will have surgery at the National Hospital this coming Monday. According to the plan, King Harald must count on staying in the hospital two to three weeks. Then he will just manage to go home to Kongsseteren to celebrate Christmas with the family.

1. What will happen to the King?

He will have surgery. OR He will go to the hospital for two to three weeks.

2. What will the King do afterwards?

He will celebrate Christmas with his family.

Sample 2

From a conversation between husband and wife

Wife: Why are you coming home so late? It's almost ten o'clock in the evening.

Husband: I had to work late at the office.

Wife: I was worried you had been in an accident. You have to call me next time.

Husband: Yes, I'll do that. Everything is OK.

3. Why was the man late?

He had to work late OR stay at the office.

4. What did the wife request?

That he call next time.

Appendix A: Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Description

Preface

The following descriptions of proficiency levels 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 characterize spoken-language use. Each higher level implies control of the previous levels' functions and accuracy. The designation 0+, 1+, 2+, etc. will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next level. The "plus-level" descriptions, therefore, are subsidiary to the "base-level" descriptions.

A skill level is assigned to a person through an authorized language examination. Examiners assign a level on a variety of performance criteria exemplified in the descriptive statements. Therefore, the examples given here illustrate, but do not exhaustively describe, either the skills a person may possess or situations in which he/she may function effectively.

Statements describing accuracy refer to typical stages in the development of competence in the most commonly taught languages in formal training programs. In other languages, emerging competence parallels these characterizations, but often with different details.

Unless otherwise specified, the term "native speaker" refers to native speakers of a standard dialect.

"Well-educated," in the context of these proficiency descriptions, does not necessarily imply formal higher education. However, in cultures where formal higher education is common, the language-use abilities of persons who have had such education is considered the standard. That is, such a person meets contemporary expectations for the formal, careful style of the language, as well as a range of less formal varieties of the language.

These descriptions may be further specified by individual agencies to characterize those aspects of language-use performance which are of insufficient generality to be included here.

Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions: Listening

Listening 0 (No Proficiency)

No practical understanding of the spoken language. Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words with essentially no ability to comprehend communication. (Has been coded L-0 in some nonautomated applications. [Data Code 00])

Listening 0+ (Memorized Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs. Slight increase in utterance length understood but requires frequent long pauses between understood phrases and repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition. Understands with reasonable accuracy only when this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. Utterances understood are relatively short in length. Misunderstandings arise due to ignoring or inaccurately hearing sounds or word endings (both inflectional and non-inflectional), distorting the original meaning. Can understand only with difficulty even such people as teachers who are used to speaking with non-native speakers. Can understand best those statements where context strongly supports the utterance's meaning. Gets some main ideas. (Has been coded L-0+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 06]

Listening 1 (Elementary Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs and minimum courtesy and travel requirements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand simple questions and answers, simple statements and very simple face-to-face conversations in a standard dialect. These must often be delivered more clearly than normal at a rate slower than normal with frequent repetitions or paraphrase (that is, by a native used to dealing with foreigners). Once learned, these sentences can be varied for similar level vocabulary and grammar and still be understood. In the majority of utterances, misunderstandings arise due to overlooked or misunderstood syntax and other grammatical clues. Comprehension vocabulary inadequate to understand anything but the most elementary needs. Strong interference from the candidate's native language occurs. Little precision in the information understood owing to the tentative state of passive grammar and lack of vocabulary. Comprehension areas include basic needs such as: meals, lodging, transportation, time and simple directions (including both route instructions and orders from customs officials, policemen, etc.). Understands main ideas. (Has been coded L-1 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 10]

Listening 1+ (Elementary Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility evident in understanding a range of circumstances beyond immediate survival needs. Shows spontaneity in understanding by speed, although consistency of understanding is uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands more common time forms and most question forms, some word order patterns, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns. Cannot sustain understanding of coherent structures in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and the giving of precise information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features (e.g., pronouns, verb inflections) but many are unreliably understood, especially if less immediate in reference. Understanding is largely limited to a series of short, discrete

utterances. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated. Some ability to understand facts. (Has been coded L-1+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 16]

Listening 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in a standard dialect, delivered at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners, about everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events and routine office matters through descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; can follow essential points of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field. Only understands occasional words and phrases of statements made in unfavorable conditions, for example through loudspeakers outdoors. Understands factual content. Native language causes less interference in listening comprehension. Able to understand facts; i.e., the lines but not between or beyond the lines. (Has been coded L-2 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 20]

Listening 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but under tension or pressure may break down. Candidate may display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. Normally understands general vocabulary with some hesitant understanding of everyday vocabulary still evident. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Some ability to understand implications. (Has been Coded L-2+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 26]

Listening 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field. Has effective understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in a standard dialect on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, news stories similar to wire service reports, oral reports, some oral technical reports and public addresses on non-technical subjects; can understand without difficulty all forms of standard speech concerning a special professional field. Does not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand implications. (Has been coded L-3 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 30]

Listening 3+ (General Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Comprehends most of the content and intent of a variety of forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, as well as general topics and social conversation. Ability to comprehend many sociolinguistic and cultural references. However, may miss some subtleties and nuances. Increased ability to comprehend unusually complex structures in lengthy utterances and to comprehend many distinctions in language tailored for different audiences. Increased ability to understand native speakers talking quickly, using nonstandard dialect or slang; however, comprehension is not complete. Can discern some relationships among sophisticated listening materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow some unpredictable turns of thought readily, for example, in informal and formal speeches covering editorial, conjectural and literary material in subject matter areas directed to the general listener. (Has been coded L-3+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 36]

Listening 4 (Advanced Professional Proficiency)

Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs. Able to understand fully all speech with extensive and precise vocabulary, subtleties and nuances in all standard dialects on any subject relevant to professional needs within the range of his/her experience, including social conversations; all intelligible broadcasts and telephone calls; and many kinds of technical discussions and discourse. Understands language specifically tailored (including persuasion, representation, counseling and negotiating) to different audiences. Able to understand the essentials of speech in some non-standard dialects. Has difficulty in understanding extreme dialect and slang, also in understanding speech in unfavorable conditions, for example through bad loudspeakers outdoors. Can discern relationships among sophisticated listening materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow unpredictable turns of thought readily, for example, in informal and formal speeches covering editorial, conjectural and literary material in any subject matter directed to the general listener. (Has been coded L-4 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 40]

Listening 4+ (Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Increased ability to understand extremely difficult and abstract speech as well as ability to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, including social conversations. Increased ability to comprehend native speakers using extreme nonstandard dialects and slang, as well as to understand speech in unfavorable conditions. Strong sensitivity to sociolinguistic and cultural references. Accuracy is close to that of the well-educated native listener but still not equivalent. (Has been coded L-4+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 46]

Listening 5 (Functionally Native Proficiency)

Comprehension equivalent to that of the well-educated native listener. Able to understand fully all forms and styles of speech intelligible to the well-educated native listener, including a number of regional and illiterate dialects, highly colloquial speech and conversations and discourse distorted by marked interference from other noise.

Able to understand how natives think as they create discourse. Able to understand extremely difficult and abstract speech. (Has been coded L-5 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data C]

Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions: Reading

R-0: Reading 0 (No Proficiency)

No practical ability to read the language. Consistently misunderstands or cannot comprehend at all.

R-0+: Reading 0+ (Memorized Proficiency)

Can recognize all the letters in the printed version of an alphabetic system and high-frequency elements of a syllabary or a character system. Able to read some or all of the following: numbers, isolated words and phrases, personal and place names, street signs, office and shop designations. The above often interpreted inaccurately. Unable to read connected prose.

R-1: Reading 1 (Elementary Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to read very simple connected written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript. Can read either representations of familiar formulaic verbal exchanges or simple language containing only the highest frequency structural patterns and vocabulary, including shared international vocabulary items and cognates (when appropriate). Able to read and understand known language elements that have been recombined in new ways to achieve different meanings at a similar level of simplicity. Texts may include descriptions of persons, places or things; and explanations of geography and government such as those simplified for tourists. Some misunderstandings possible on simple texts. Can get some main ideas and locate prominent items of professional significance in more complex texts. Can identify general subject matter in some authentic texts.

R-1+: Reading 1+ (Elementary Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes. Can read material such as announcements of public events, simple prose containing biographical information or narration of events, and straightforward newspaper headlines. Can guess at unfamiliar vocabulary if highly contextualized, but with difficulty in unfamiliar contexts. Can get some main ideas and locate routine information of professional significance in more complex texts. Can follow essential points of written discussion at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field.

In commonly taught languages, the individual may not control the structure well. For example, basic grammatical relations are often misinterpreted, and temporal reference may rely primarily on lexical items as time indicators. Has some difficulty with the

cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. May have to read materials several times for understanding.

R-2: Reading 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context. Able to read with some misunderstandings straightforward, familiar, factual material, but in general insufficiently experienced with the language to draw inferences directly from the linguistic aspects of the text. Can locate and understand the main ideas and details in material written for the general reader. However, persons who have professional knowledge of a subject may be able to summarize or perform sorting and locating tasks with written texts that are well beyond their general proficiency level. The individual can read uncomplicated, but authentic prose on familiar subjects that are normally presented in a predictable sequence which aids the reader in understanding. Texts may include descriptions and narrations in contexts such as news items describing frequently occurring events, simple biographical information, social notices, formulaic business letters, and simple technical material written for the general reader. Generally the prose that can be read by the individual is predominantly in straightforward/high-frequency sentence patterns. The individual does not have a broad active vocabulary (that is, which he/she recognizes immediately on sight), but is able to use contextual and real-world cues to understand the text. Characteristically, however, the individual is quite slow in performing such a process. Is typically able to answer factual questions about authentic texts of the types described above.

R-2+: Reading 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests. Is markedly more proficient at reading materials on a familiar topic. Is able to separate the main ideas and details from lesser ones and uses that distinction to advance understanding. The individual is able to use linguistic context and real-world knowledge to make sensible guesses about unfamiliar material. Has a broad active reading vocabulary. The individual is able to get the gist of main and subsidiary ideas in texts which could only be read thoroughly by persons with much higher proficiencies. Weaknesses include slowness, uncertainty, inability to discern nuance and/or intentionally disguised meaning.

R-3: Reading 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although it is not expected that the individual can comprehend thoroughly subject matter which is highly dependent on cultural knowledge or which is outside his/her general experience and not accompanied by explanation. Text-types include news stories similar to wire service reports or

international news items in major periodicals, routine correspondence, general reports, and technical material in his/her professional field; all of these may include hypothesis, argumentation and supported opinions. Misreading rare. Almost always able to interpret material correctly, relate ideas and "read between the lines," (that is, understand the writers' implicit intents in text of the above types). Can get the gist of more sophisticated texts, but may be unable to detect or understand subtlety and nuance. Rarely has to pause over or reread general vocabulary. However, may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structure and low frequency idioms.

R-3+: Reading 3+ (General Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Can comprehend a variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs. Rarely misinterprets such texts or rarely experiences difficulty relating ideas or making inferences. Able to comprehend many sociolinguistic and cultural references. However, may miss some nuances and subtleties. Able to comprehend a considerable range of intentionally complex structures, low frequency idioms, and uncommon connotative intentions, however, accuracy is not complete. The individual is typically able to read with facility, understand, and appreciate contemporary expository, technical or literary texts which do not rely heavily on slang and unusual items.

R-4: Reading 4 (Advanced Professional Proficiency)

Able to read fluently and accurately all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional needs. The individual's experience with the written language is extensive enough that he/she is able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references. Able to "read beyond the lines" (that is, to understand the full ramifications of texts as they are situated in the wider cultural, political, or social environment). Able to read and understand the intent of writers' use of nuance and subtlety. The individual can discern relationships among sophisticated written materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow unpredictable turns of thought readily in, for example, editorial, conjectural, and literary texts in any subject matter area directed to the general reader. Can read essentially all materials in his/her special field, including official and professional documents and correspondence. Recognizes all professionally relevant vocabulary known to the educated non-professional native, although may have some difficulty with slang. Can read reasonably legible handwriting without difficulty. Accuracy is often nearly that of a well-educated native reader.

R-4+: Reading 4+ (Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Nearly native ability to read and understand extremely difficult or abstract prose, a very wide variety of vocabulary, idioms, colloquialisms and slang. Strong sensitivity to and understanding of sociolinguistic and cultural references. Little difficulty in reading less than fully legible handwriting. Broad ability to "read beyond the lines" (that is, to understand the full ramifications of texts as they are situated in the wider cultural,

political, or social environment) is nearly that of a well-read or well-educated native reader. Accuracy is close to that of the well-educated native reader, but not equivalent.

R-5: Reading 5 (Functionally Native Proficiency)

Reading proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of the well-educated native reader. Can read extremely difficult and abstract prose; for example, general legal and technical as well as highly colloquial writings. Able to read literary texts, typically including contemporary avant-garde prose, poetry and theatrical writing. Can read classical/archaic forms of literature with the same degree of facility as the well-educated, but non-specialist native. Reads and understands a wide variety of vocabulary and idioms, colloquialisms, slang, and pertinent cultural references. With varying degrees of difficulty, can read all kinds of handwritten documents. Accuracy of comprehension is equivalent to that of a well-educated native reader.